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ART NEEDLEWORK

OUR SOUTH KENSINGTON DESIGNS.



LAST month we gave the first of a series of original and beautiful working designs, furnished exclusively to THE ART AMATEUR, by the Royal School of Art Needlework at South Kensington, and to be published regularly in our supplements throughout the coming year. In this issue we begin the second of the series, an exquisite design of myrtle, rose, jasmine and honeysuckle, for a fourfold screen, of which a miniature illustration is given herewith. Strictly speaking this is a set of designs, the first of which—the myrtle—is given the full working size in the supplement (Plate CCXX.), while the second, third and fourth will appear successively in our December, January and February issues. The only directions given by the South Kensington designer for the execution of this screen are embodied in the words: "Worked on satin in silk, natural colors." The following additional suggestions may be found helpful:

For the ground, amber-hued satin for the myrtle and jasmine panels, and pale gray-blue satin for the rose and honeysuckle panels, would be effective. The embroidery should be done in filioles. For the myrtle use deep gray-blue, gradually paler toward the centre, which must be cream-white; foliage dark blue-green; stems and back or under side of foliage a lighter, yellower tone. For the wild roses use very light tones of pink for the upper roses shaded with richer tints, and gradually deepen the color and enrich the shading toward the bottom of the panel; use pale yellow for the stamens and yellow-greens for the foliage. For the jasmine use cream-white for the petals, the high lights to be worked in gray-white; white-green for the stems and the calyxes; blue-greens for the upper and yellow-greens for the lower side of the foliage. For the honeysuckle use rich buff for the flowers, and blend in orange and deep vermilion in the tubular part where the flower enters the calyx; make the stamens cream-white, tipped with light brown done in a single French knot or antique stitch; use yellow-greens for the upper and white-green for the under side of the foliage.

After the completion of the screen in February, an exquisite variety of borders will be successively given, together with chair-seats and panels.

EMBROIDERY NOTES.

MATERIALS for embroidery, judging by the work prepared through the summer for the autumn displays, are distinguished either for their richness or for their cheapness. At the extremes are superb plushes and linen crash. Commonplace materials, of which the most conspicuous example is felt, are absolutely unused. On plush, arrasene, silk, and tinsel braids are employed; on crash, silk and English crewels. Crash is transformed by the beauty of drawing, the harmony of the colors, and the skilful execution. The luxuriousness of plush takes off somewhat from the effectiveness of the art displayed in its decoration, which is to say that bad art can be better afforded upon plush than on homely crash, as the latter fabric hides none of the faults of the unskilful workman.

Mantel lambrequins for the more ornamental rooms of the house are of plush. The prevalent shape is a straight band, bordered by a smaller band, and finished with a fringe, which is one of the most ornamental parts of the lambrequin. The embroidery is done in arrasene almost exclusively, although silk or filiole may be seen lavishly varied with tinsel and beads. There is an affinity, however, between plush and arrasene which nothing can well resist.

A straight mantel lambrequin of dark red plush has a conventional design which deserves a better description than words can give. It is a flowering scroll which in each hollow is met by a large flower. These flowers proceed from the top of the scroll and turning backward curl an end around the scroll giving the impression of a counter scroll. In this design the lines and leaves are in shaded brown arrasenes, ranging almost to white. The flowers are in blue arrasene the hues taking an equally wide range. The outlines are all in tinsel thread. The lambrequin, which retains a margin of the red plush, is finished with heavy red silk fringe in clustered threads.

A shaded blue green plush lambrequin is cut turret-shaped into three blocks, the one directly in the centre being wider than the two at the ends. Each of these blocks is embroidered in arrasene with golden-rod leaves and flowers. Golden-rod as a decoration

is not a novelty, but in this case the treatment is novel. The plush shades from deep green into light, cool greens. The color of the decoration begins with the deep greens of the foliage, growing lighter as the plush becomes lighter, and the flowers, instead of the fiery yellows and browns in which they are usually represented, begin with lighter, cooler tints and are led up to a greenish white. The color effect is pretty and makes an agreeable variation of that much-hackneyed plant.

The autumn introduces several new plants to popular favor. The most striking of these is the milkweed whose bursting pods are familiarly known along the highway. A black willow easy chair with gilded outlines has a cushion back and seat of crimson plush, decorated with the leaves and flowers of the milkweed. The strength and hues of the long-tongued leaves with the delicacy of the flowers, are among the best embroidery effects of the season. The work is in arrasene, which gives a realistic effect to the flowers. These are in the palest pinkish white, for there is a touch of color in the white into which here and there hues a little deeper are introduced. It is impossible to describe the stitches, for in these, as in a great deal of the art embroidery of the present, everything is held legitimate which contributes to the effect. The flowers have a peculiarly raised silky look due to the way in which the arrasene is used.

Another new flower is the thistle, whose richness of color and pronounced form are admissible for much decorative work where the ground is well chosen. The flower has been closely studied.

Outline stitch abates nothing in favor. Music portfolios luxuriously lined with silk are ornamented with suitable designs in outline stitch. Such is a pongee portfolio lined with brown satin and finished with a cord. On the outside is a large harp done with brown silks, in outline stitch, and intertwined among the strings in old English the legend: "If music be the food of love, play on." On others may be wrought the notes of some favorite song with the words, or a bar of some sonata with the composer's name or some appropriate sentiment.

The pongee work-apron is the badge of the amateur work-woman. No prettier regalia could be desired. A new design divides the decoration into two parts, separated by a straight, heavy line in outline stitch of brown silk. In the upper part is a kitten playing with a ball of yarn attached to a half-knit stocking. In the corner of the lower part are three children seated on chairs at their work, a capital piece of drawing, their earnestness being happily shown in the execution. On the unoccupied space is worked the rest of the couplet begun in the upper part:

"When the day is fitting
We all take out our knitting."

Another pongee apron has a band done in outline and satin stitch, with flowers and leaves in the same stitches in deep and light yellow pinks, making with the pongee an unusual but beautiful piece of color. Love-in-the-mist and the thistle are also used on these aprons.

Pineapple cloth is now used for chair-backs or tidies. For handsome chairs its transparency is desirable, in order not to disguise the richness of the upholstery, and its delicate richness makes it much more in keeping than the thicker linens and crash. The embroidery on pineapple cloth may be in outline stitch or in solid silk embroidery. In either case the execution should be very neat and skilful, as it easily shows a careless hand.

Skate bags are made of colored silks and satins lined with chamois and decorated. For boys and girls who have not yet arrived at the careful age the outside may be of brown linen, which is not unworthy the most artistic decoration.

NEEDLEWORK NOVELTIES.

AMONG the novelties in autumn needlework imported from England, and worthy of note, is a set of twelve doilies in pongee silk having a border of fine old-time tambour work on lace. In the four corners are wrought tiny sprays of clover-leaves, lilies of the valley, rose-buds, tulips, and other flowers, the silk used being a thread of filo-floss, and the stitch the most delicate of stem-stitches.

A chair-back of pongee silk has a broad border of darned embroidery in silks. The design of this exquisite piece is of large lavender blossoms, like those of the mallow in shape, outlined with a deeper shade of purple, and having old-gold centres. The stems are of brown silk, and the abundant foliage is closely darned in dull pale green silk, and outlined in brown.

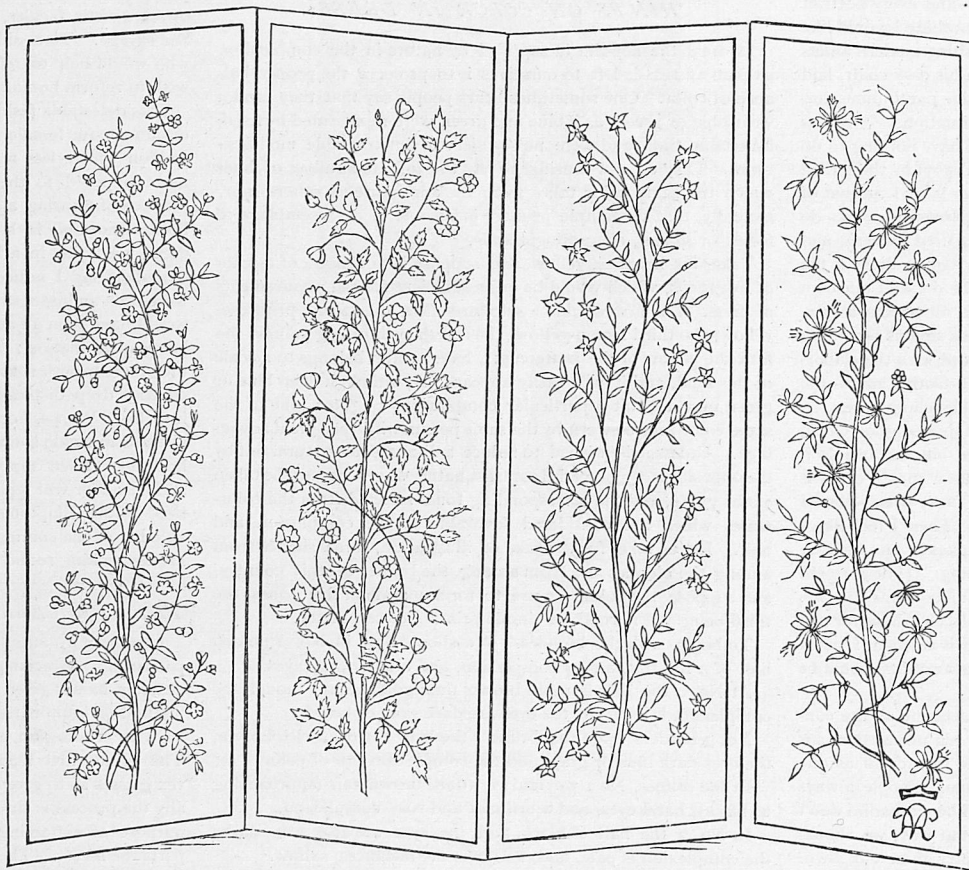
One merit of pongee when used for chair-backs is the beautiful fringe so easily produced by ravelling out the stuff. With hem-stitched borders and a long silky fringe any simple pattern may be used with good effect.

The design just described is repeated with charming results upon a sheer length of linen cambric, also meant for a chair-back. In this case the idea is varied by employing two shades of pinkish purple for darning-in the flowers, the foliage being simply outlined in stem-stitch, and veined in darker green.

A new material for workers is a kind of cotton crape-cloth, écu and white, of sufficient weight to take and retain good embroidery. A chair-back in this stuff, has a large branch of Japanese lilies, worked in copper-red, yellow and salmon silks, with dull green foliage. The lustre of the new filo-floss, or washing-silk, in these tints is very brilliant, and embroiderers will hail with gratitude the opportunity to set to work on a washing fabric without the preliminary tedious process of setting the colors of their silks.

A linen toilet-cover is worked in fine crewels with sprays of grass and clover, with pin-cushion cover and mats to correspond. This is trimmed at each end with lace, and while not new, is successful through the good drawing and airy grace of the design.

Chair-backs in olive sateen are useful for the library, and are simply fringed out and knotted at the ends, a design of yellow jonquils being worked in two shades upon the lower edge.



SOUTH KENSINGTON DESIGN FOR A FOURFOLD SCREEN.

MYRTLE, ROSE, JASMINE, AND HONEYSUCKLE. (SEE SUPPLEMENT, PLATE CCXX.)

The calyx is done in green and olive crewels in Kensington stitch. This is afterward crossed by diagonal lines in greenish olive silk, caught down at the crossings of the lines, which gives that scaly effect seen on a thistle calyx. The purple bloom is in arrasene, mingled with silk, and lighter silks are used to give the long, hairy effect of the upper part of the thistle flower.

The love-in-the-mist, as adapted for embroidery, is not a novelty, but its use is largely increasing, particularly in delicate work, in which the slender lines appear with beautiful effect. It is chiefly seen on pongee toilet-covers, work-aprons, fine linen doilies and crash, although a rose baby blanket, one of the prettiest yet shown, is covered with sprays of this flower done in greens and delicate pink instead of the blue green of the natural flower.

Scarf table-covers of plush with embroidery of arrasene, mingled with beads and tinsels, are as much desired as last season, and the designs remain much the same. An equally handsome and more serviceable square table-cover appears with the centre of some of the rich art stuffs which the upholsterer now furnishes, instead of solid plush, which, though handsome, soon shows signs of wear. A beautiful example of this is a relief design in dull olive greens on a gold ground. The border is a large conventional design of the same tints mingled with art blues and reds. This is done with crewels in large, loose Kensington stitch, with silks for the high lights, and finished with fringe.